

MORE THAN ALL THE SKY

Book and lyrics by Lori Ada Jaroslow
Music & additional lyrics by Morgan Hollingsworth

Character Breakdown

1. LENNA HARRIS: Female, white, 27, Mezzo/Belt F3-E5.
2. TEEN LENNA: Female, white, 18+ to play 12-17, Mezzo/Belt A3-F5.
3. MAE HARRIS: Female, white, 48-68, Alto/Mezzo F3-E5.
4. CHIRPY/OCEAN: A bird portrayed by a strong dancer, female or non-binary, non-white (preferably Latina), 18-35, Soprano C4-B5.
5. JORDAN CHEN: Female or non-binary, non-white (preferably Asian or Middle Eastern), 28, Alto/Mezzo G3-D5. Sober.
6. ALEX HARRIS: Male or non-binary, Black or Latino, 23, 2nd Tenor C3-G4.

Ensemble: various characters, sometimes abstract.

7. TEEN JORDAN: Female or non-binary, non-white (preferably Asian or Middle Eastern, same ethnicity as the actor playing JORDAN CHEN), 18+ to play 13-18, Mezzo A3-E5, strong dancer.
8. YOUNG ALEX/LOUIE: Male or non-binary, Black or Latino, 18+ to play 9 and 20-38, Tenor C3-A4, strong dancer.
9. YOUNG LENNA/VANESSA: Female, white, 18+ to play 7 and 20-30, Mezzo, strong dancer.
10. VIRGINIA/BLUE: Female identifying or non-binary, race non-specific, 35-45, Mezzo/Soprano A3-E5, strong dancer.
11. NORMA/DOCTOR FEINSTEIN: Female identifying or non-binary, race nonspecific, 40-60, Alto/Mezzo, strong dancer.

Location

Modern day, a suburb of Chicago. The house has three areas: Lenna's bedroom, a living/dining room, a screened in porch and a backyard.

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FROM THE AUTHORS

If there are discrepancies between the libretto and the demos, the written word takes precedence.

FLASHBACKS are used throughout the show and are italicized. **The flashbacks have a home movie feel.**

PRESENT day scenes are not italicized.

ACT IScene 1**(1. Break-In)**

A bird, CHIRPY, dances alone gracefully and hypnotically. THE ENSEMBLE joins him. CHIRPY is played by a female identifying dancer. The dance is abruptly interrupted as LENNA HARRIS, 27, dirty and unkempt, breaks into a house. Her movement is unstable and labored. LENNA walks into the living room. SHE pulls a wallet out of a purse that sits on a table and takes money out of it. SHE removes a compact from the purse and looks into the mirror.

LENNA

I fucking hate you, Lenna!

(SHE throws the compact back in the purse, grabs a pill bottle from a side table, and runs onto the patio where there is a birdcage with a plant in it. SHE kicks the cage hard and the pot falls, breaking into several pieces. THE ENSEMBLE initiates a flashback through singing and movement. LENNA observes the flashback.)

(FLASHBACK. MAE HARRIS, 48 and her daughter YOUNG LENNA, 7, are playing with their bird, CHIRPY. YOUNG LENNA is building a Jenga tower.)

(2. Flashback #1)

YOUNG LENNA

WHEN I GET MUCH MORE BIGGER
I'LL BUILD A BIG HUGE HOUSE
WITH CEILINGS THAT GO UP TO THE SKY
AND I'LL NEVER BE ALONE

THE ROOMS WILL BE GIGANTIC
SO CHIRPY CAN FLY AROUND ALL DAY
AND WHEN HE GETS TIRED HE COULD HAVE A SNACK AND TAKE A NAP
THEN GO THE OTHER WAY

THERE CAN BE ROOMS FOR DOGS AND ROOMS FOR PLANTS AND
ROOMS FOR LOTS OF KIDS
AND THERE CAN ALSO BE A ROOM THAT'S JUST FOR YOU MOM
IN CASE YOU WANNA HAVE A SLEEP OVER

Mommy, I love Chirpy so much. He's so pretty. Mommy can a boy be pretty?

MAE

Sure, Lenna.

CHIRPY IS SO BEAUTIFUL
I LOVE HIS TURQUOISE SHEEN
I ALSO LOVE HIS YELLOW FEATHERS

YOUNG LENNA

My favorite's the green. Chirpy is my brother.

MAE

Um, honey, Chirpy is a bird.

YOUNG LENNA

Duh, he's not a turtle.

MAE

Would you like another? A brother you can talk to and play games with and read books with?

YOUNG LENNA

I just like Chirpy. He's a really nice friend.

MAE

But honey...

A BOY TO BE YOUR WITNESS
SHARE YOUR SECRETS AND YOUR DREAMS
SOMEONE WHO KNOWS YOUR STORY
YOU COULD PLAY AND SHARE YOUR SCHEMES

YOUNG LENNA

Wait, Mommy are you pregnant with another girl or boy?

MAE

It's a little late for that, pumpkin.

BUT A BABY WOULD BRING JOY

There are a lot of kids of all ages who don't have homes. Their parents can't take care of them.

YOUNG LENNA

That is sad.

MAE

It is. But, sometimes other parents take those children into their families. I've been thinking about adopting a child.

YOUNG LENNA

Oh, like get another kid that's already borned? Um... okay. Hey Chirpy, come here!

(CHIRPY flies to the top of the Jenga Tower. MAE and YOUNG LENNA sing a round, teaching Chirpy to sing.)

MAE

(to CHIRPY)

I LOVE YOU

YOUNG LENNA

(to CHIRPY)

I LOVE YOU

CHIRPY

I LOVE YOU

MAE

I LOVE YOU

YOUNG LENNA

I LOVE YOU

CHIRPY

I LOVE YOU

MAE

HEY, CHIRPY

YOUNG LENNA

HEY, CHIRPY

CHIRPY

HEY, CHIRPY

I LOVE YOU MAE
 I LOVE YOU YOUNG LENNA
 I LOVE YOU CHIRPY

LOO LOO LOO LOO LOO MAE
 LOO LOO LOO LOO LOO YOUNG LENNA

(not quite understanding)
 AH AH AH AH AH AH CHIRPY

No. MAE

LOO LOO LOO LOO LOO
 LOO LOO LOO LOO LOO YOUNG LENNA

LOO LOO LOO LOO LOO CHIRPY

MAE, YOUNG LENNA, & CHIRPY
 LOO LOO LOO LOO LOO
 AH AH AH AH AH AHHHH

YOUNG LENNA
 Could Chirpy sleep with me?

MAE
 I'm afraid he'd keep you awake.

(MAE tucks Chirpy into his cage.)

YOUNG LENNA
 See you tomorrow Chirpy, sweet dreams. Mommy, is Daddy safe in heaven?

MAE

I think he is. There are angels taking care of him.

YOUNG LENNA

I miss him.

MAE

Of course you do, bunny. We both do.

(MAE puts YOUNG LENNA into bed.)

YOUNG LENNA

Will you sing the noodle song?

MAE

Of course.

(3. Mae's Lullaby)

CLOSE YOUR EYES MY NOODLE
TOMORROW WILL COME SOON
I LOVE YOU SO MY DOODLE
FROM HERE UP TO THE MOON
YOU'RE SWEETER THAN THE SWEETEST COOKIE
I COULD BAKE OR BUY
SO, GO TO SLEEP
AND THAT'S MY LULLABY

YOUNG LENNA

I love you, Mommy. And I love Daddy and Chirpy.

MAE

I love you more than all the sky. I'll be back to turn off your light and music.

*(THE ENSEMBLE brings us back to **PRESENT DAY**. The actress who plays MAE transforms to a frailer, MAE, 68. LENNA, 27, sees her mom from the sun porch and runs out of the house. MAE screams.)*

MAE

Lenna!

(ALEX, 21, Lenna's brother, rushes into the room.)

ALEX

What's wrong?

MAE

Our daughter ran out, there.

ALEX

Mom, I don't have a daughter.

MAE

I know my daughter.

ALEX

But not your son, apparently.

MAE

Lenna was right there on the patio and then...

ALEX

Right and President Kennedy was in the kitchen yesterday making shortbread.

MAE

He was making scones.

(MAE points to the bird cage.)

ALEX

In that case. Whoa, it's windy but that's too heavy to tip over. I'll clean it up.

(ALEX goes to the table where Mae's purse is open. He picks up her open wallet.)

MAE

I'm sure it was her. She said she'd come home.

ALEX

Mom, that was nine years ago.

MAE

What if she didn't have money for a bus? Maybe she got lost.

ALEX

Oh, she definitely got lost, but not because she didn't have bus fare. I'll open the blinds and let some light in here, okay?

MAE

Thanks, Cam.

ALEX

Alex, Mom. I'm Alex.

MAE

Where's Cam?

ALEX

He's uh, you know, dead, remember?

(4. Interlude #1)

MAE

Right. With Chirpy.

HELP ME I'M EMBARRASSED
SEEMS LIKE NOTHING'S MAKING SENSE
COULD I BE GOING CRAZY?
IS MY BRAIN LOCKED IN A FENCE?

I KNOW WHAT I AM THINKING
BUT IT NEVER COMES OUT RIGHT
I JUMBLE WORDS AND MUMBLE
BUT THIS MORNING IN THE LIGHT

I'M SO SURE I SAW MY DAUGHTER
SHE WAS OVER THERE
AND I WANTED SO TO HOLD HER
IT SEEMED LIKE SHE WAS RACING
TO GO SOMEWHERE FAR AWAY
I WISH I HADN'T LET HER...

(THE ENSEMBLE brings us into the next scene.)

ACT 1Scene 2**(5. Okay)**

LENNA arrives at Harte Park. She looks around at the jungle gym and a tree with a swing. She unpacks a garbage bag that holds some clothes and cigarettes. The ENSEMBLE becomes the voices in Lenna's head.

LENNA

WELCOME HOME, GUESS THIS IS IT
GUESS THIS IS HOME
WELCOME HOME TO ALL THE SHIT
THAT I LEFT BEHIND

IS ANYONE HOME, CAUSE I DON'T KNOW
WHERE ELSE I CAN GO
IS ANYONE HOME, I'M MOVING SLOW
AND I'M FLYING BLIND

CAUSE NOBODY WANTS ME
NOBODY SEES ME
LOOK AT ME BEFORE I DISAPPEAR
I'M MORE INVISIBLE YEAR BY YEAR

IF ONLY
IF ONLY I COULD BE OKAY
FEEL LIKE SOMEONE ELSE SOMEDAY
TO FEEL LIKE HUMAN SKIN AGAIN
TAKE A SHOWER NOW AND THEN
SOMEDAY, IF ONLY
IF ONLY I COULD BE OKAY
IF ONLY I COULD BE OKAY
IF ONLY I COULD BE OKAY

ENSEMBLE #1

Where the Hell's our bed?

ENSEMBLE #2

This place doesn't exactly come furnished.

ENSEMBLE #3

Then, where are we going to sleep?

LENNA

SO THIS IS IT, NOW I'M A GHOST
 THAT SLEEPS BY A TREE
 SO THIS IS IT, SO I'LL MAKE THE MOST
 OF WHAT'S LEFT OF ME YEAH

TURN OFF THE NOISE, TOO MANY VOICES
 THAT SCREAM IN MY HEAD
 TURN OFF THE VOICES, DON'T BLAME ME FOR CHOICES
 THAT LEFT ME FOR DEAD

COULD ANYONE WANT ME
 CAN ANYONE HEAR ME?

LOOK AT ME I'M SCREAMING SILENT WORDS
 I'M OUT HERE FREEZING AMONG THE BIRDS

IF ONLY,
 IF ONLY I COULD BE OKAY
 FEEL LIKE SOMEONE ELSE SOMEDAY
 TO FEEL A HAND AGAINST MY FACE
 GIVE MY LIFE AN OUNCE OF GRACE

SOMEDAY, IF ONLY
 IF ONLY I COULD BE OKAY
 IF ONLY I COULD BE OKAY
 IF ONLY I COULD BE OKAY

LENNA, COME ON, THERE'S SHIT TO DO
 SO WRITE OUT A LIST

ENSEMBLE

COULD ANYONE WANT ME?

LENNA

I'LL MAKE A TO-DO LIST
 LET'S MAKE A TO-DO LIST

GET IT TOGETHER, THERE'S SOMETHING I MISSED
 JUST WRITE OUT A LIST

ENSEMBLE

CAN ANYONE SEE ME?

LENNA

ONE MORE TO-DO LIST
WHAT'S ONE MORE TO-DO LIST?

(LENNA drinks and tries to write frantically.)

LENNA	ENSEMBLE #1	ENSEMBLE #2
FIND A JACKET	SO THIS IS IT, NOW	I JUST WANNA BE OKAY
SEE A DOCTOR	I'M THE GHOST	I JUST WANNA BE OKAY
GET A TOOTHBRUSH	THAT SLEEPS BY A	I JUST WANNA BE OKAY
	TREE	I JUST WANNA BE OKAY
WASH MY HAIR	SO THIS IS IT, SO	I JUST WANNA BE OKAY
	I'LL MAKE THE MOST	I JUST WANNA BE OKAY
CALL MY BROTHER	OF WHAT'S LEFT OF ME	I JUST WANNA BE OKAY
	YEAH	I JUST WANNA BE OKAY
FIX MY PHONE FIRST		I JUST WANNA BE OKAY
FIND THE GUTS TO CALL	TURN OFF THE NOISE,	I JUST WANNA BE OKAY
MY MOM..	TOO MANY VOICES THAT	I JUST WANNA BE OKAY
	SCREAM IN MY HEAD	I JUST WANNA BE OKAY
I JUST WANNA BE OKAY		I JUST WANNA BE OKAY
I JUST WANNA BE OKAY	TURN OFF THE NOISE	I JUST WANNA BE OKAY
I JUST WANNA BE OKAY	TURN OFF THE NOISE	I JUST WANNA BE OKAY

(CHIRPY appears as if in Lenna's mind, haunting her. LENNA pulls out a small aluminum foil package and puts a ball of heroin on the spoon, melts it with a cigarette lighter, fills the syringe, and filters it through the cotton. SHE stares at the syringe.)

CHIRPY

OOH, OOH

LENNA

SOMEDAY...

LENNA & ENSEMBLE

I JUST WANNA BE OKAY
I JUST WANNA BE OKAY
I JUST WANNA BE OKAY

LENNA

Shut up!

(LENNA shoots up. THE VOICES IN HER HEAD stop. SHE sits on a swing, smoking a cigarette, nodding out and talking to herself. JORDAN CHEN who was LENNA'S best friend and

TEEN LENNA

We're breaking our drinking virginity. Wahoo!

TEEN JORDAN

Today's the day. Here goes, cheers!

(THEY both drink.)

TEEN LENNA

Yum. It tastes like candy. More please.

(They drink more. LENNA studies the box.)

Look. "PRIVATE, DO NOT OPEN" all upper case. Hope my mom doesn't find out that I snooped.

TEEN JORDAN

She could have hid it, or put a lock on it. Do you know anything about the accident?

(THEY both continue to drink, Teen Lenna in the lead.)

TEEN LENNA

All's I know is he was drunk. And if this is what drunk feels like, he was no dummy. Look here's a letter, this looks like his handwriting.

(LENNA opens the folded letter.)

"Darling, by the time you read this, I will be gone".

Wait, what?

"I've thought about this obsess... what's this? Obsessi..."

(SHE shows it to TEEN JORDAN.)

TEEN JORDAN

Obsesh, it's hard to read.

TEEN LENNA

Obsessively for the past year, my love, and I can't see another way out. The worst part of it is the pain I'm afraid I'll cause you and Lenna. I pray that Lenna won't remember because she's so young."

TEEN LENNA (cont.)

What the ever-loving fuck, Jordan? What is he saying?

TEEN JORDAN

I'm not sure, but it's not good. You still want to keep reading?

TEEN LENNA

Yeah.

"You don't deserve this. You and Lenna are the most exquisite gifts of my entire life. Please know that this has nothing to do with you. There are no words to express how deeply sorry I am. I can no longer live with all that I am and have become. I am unable to forgive myself."

TEEN JORDAN

You want me to finish reading it?

TEEN LENNA

No...

"Please, go on with your life and find love again. I love you and Lenna more than all the sky."

Jordy, did my Dad like... kill himself?

TEEN JORDAN

I'd say... uh... affirmative. Sure sounds like it.

TEEN LENNA

Why? And why wouldn't she tell me?

TEEN JORDAN

You were young. She was protecting you.

TEEN LENNA

I'm not that young now. My Dad like, logged out... on purpose?

TEEN JORDAN

Keep breathing, Len. I got you.

(TEEN LENNA collapses in TEEN JORDAN's arms.)

(7. Pandora's Box)

TEEN LENNA

I hate her for not telling me.

DID I REALLY JUST READ THAT
 I'M NOT SURE I UNDERSTAND
 IS MY EYESIGHT TRICKING ME?
 THIS WAS NOT THE DAY THAT I HAD PLANNED

SHE MEANT IT, "DO NOT OPEN"
 NOW MY MIND'S ON OVERDRIVE
 CRAZY HOW ONE PIECE OF PAPER
 COULD TOTALLY RUIN MY WHOLE LIFE

TEEN JORDAN

WE DON'T KNOW FOR SURE JUST YET
 I KNOW THE PAIN IS BITING
 IT'S JUST A PIECE OF PAPER
 WITH SOME SCRIBBLY FADED WRITING

TEEN LENNA

LET ME DRINK SOME MORE INSTEAD
 TO TAKE THE EDGE OFF, LIKE YOUR MOTHER SAID
 IT'S SWEET AND CALMS MY BRAIN
 WHEN I SWALLOW IT I FEEL A LITTLE LESS INSANE

I NEVER SHOULD HAVE OPENED THE BOX
 I WISH I NEVER SAW THAT LETTER
 THE LETTER INSIDE PANDORA'S BOX
 THE LETTER INSIDE PANDORA'S BOX

(very drunk now)

WHAT AN UGLY SECRET TO HIDE FROM ME
 I CAN'T BELIEVE MOM LIED TO ME
 I WANT TO YELL RIGHT IN HER FACE
 THE DAD MY MOM TRIED TO ERASE
 MOM I'LL NEVER EVER LET YOU SLIDE

TEEN JORDAN

LENNA DON'T FREAK OUT JUST YET
 YOU DON'T KNOW HOW SHE'S HURTING
 THERE'S GOTTA BE A REASON
 MAYBE STUFF THAT SHE'S BEEN SKIRTING

IT'S JUST A PIECE OF PAPER...

TEEN LENNA

Maybe...

TEEN LENNA
 LET ME DRINK UNTIL I'M DEAD
 IT TAKES THE EDGE OFF
 IT TAKES THE EDGE OFF
 I NEVER SHOULD HAVE OPENED THE
 BOX
 I WISH I NEVER SAW THAT LETTER

TEEN JORDAN
 WE DON'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED YET
 I'LL HOLD YOU WHILE YOU'RE
 CRYING
 IT'S JUST A PIECE OF PAPER

TEEN LENNA & TEEN JORDAN
 THE LETTER INSIDE PANDORAS BOX
 THE LETTER INSIDE PANDORAS BOX

(TEEN LENNA shakes the thermos.)

TEEN LENNA
 Damn it's empty.

(THE ENSEMBLE brings us back to **PRESENT DAY**. JORDAN and LENNA turn away from each other, and JORDAN starts walking out of the park.)

(8. Ghost)

JORDAN
 OH MY GOD, LENNA'S REALLY HERE
 ALL THESE YEARS OF PRAYING SHE WOULD SOMEDAY REAPPEAR
 BUT NOW SHE'S NEAR, AND IT'S WHAT I FEARED THE MOST
 A SKELETON, SO HOLLOW, NOT A PERSON, JUST A GHOST

IS THIS ALL BECAUSE OF ME?
 ALL THE GHOSTS OF WHO WE USED TO BE?
 IS IT ALL BECAUSE OF ME?

I HAVE TO BELIEVE THAT THE WAY SHE IS NOW
 WAS NEVER MY FAULT I SHOULD LET GO SOMEHOW
 THIS FUCKING DISEASE TURNS YOUR LIFE ON IT'S HEAD
 SOME LIVES BEGIN, SOME FOLKS FIND THEMSELVES DEAD
 I CAN'T LET THIS BE LENNA'S END

DOES SHE STILL REMEMBER ME?
 AND THE GHOSTS OF WHO WE USED TO BE?
 DOES SHE STILL REMEMBER ME?

I CAN NOT OBSESS ABOUT LENNA THIS WAY
 AFTER MY CLASS I'LL TELL ALEX AND MAE
 WHATEVER HAPPENS SHE CAN'T RUN AWAY
 PERSON OR GHOST, I JUST WANT HER TO BE OKAY

ACT IScene 3

NU BREW - A hipster coffee shop in the center of town. ALEX pours himself a cup of coffee while giving BLUE, an employee, instructions at the espresso machine.

ALEX

(to BLUE)
Make sure to pack it tightly.

BLUE

Got it, Alex.

(LENNA ambles out of the coffee shop bathroom, grabbing a scrap of a sandwich from a table. She stops in front of a beautiful painting of the Harris family, which catapults her into a flashback.)

(9. Family (Part 1))

(The ENSEMBLE brings us into another **FLASHBACK**. YOUNG ALEX, 9 has arrived at the Harris's home.)

MAE

ALEX, IT'S SO GOOD TO SEE YOU TODAY.

(YOUNG ALEX stares at his feet with his head down.)

YOU MUST BE TIRED, YOU'VE COME A LONG WAY.

(HE continues to stare at his feet.)

HOW ARE YOU DOING? WOULD YOU LIKE A SNACK?
YOUR SISTER WILL SHOW YOU AROUND.
THEN WE'LL UNPACK.

(HE picks up his head and shrugs.)

HEY ALEX, ARE YOU OKAY?
DO YOU WANT TO GO OUTSIDE WITH LENNA TO PLAY?

(MAE calls upstairs to Teen Lenna.)

LENNA COME DOWN HERE, YOUR BROTHER IS HERE
ALEX, I PROMISE, THERE'S NOTHING TO FEAR

WE'RE SO HAPPY THAT YOU'VE JOINED OUR FAMILY
YOU'LL HAVE A BIRD A BIKE AND BACKYARD TOO
ON YOUR BEDROOM CEILING IS A SKY WITH SILVER STARS
NOW YOU'VE BECOME A MEMBER OF OUR CREW

(TEEN LENNA enters, looking on icily.)

WE'RE SO HAPPY THAT YOU'VE JOINED OUR FAMILY
NOW YOU HAVE A MOM AND SISTER TOO
WE HOPE THAT YOU'LL FEEL COMFORTABLE AND COZY IN YOUR HOME
WE'RE SO GLAD THAT THE MISSING PIECE WAS YOU

TEEN LENNA

(responding to a look from Mae)

What?

MAE

You remember Alex...

TEEN LENNA

Duh. Hi.

YOUNG ALEX

Hi.

MAE

Why don't you remind Alex where everything is? He hasn't met
Chirpy yet, and you can take him to his room.

(MAE pulls TEEN LENNA aside.)

What's with the attitude? This must be hard for him.

TEEN LENNA

Whatever.

MAE

What's wrong with you?

TEEN LENNA

Nothing. I'll show him around.

(to YOUNG ALEX)

Come on, let's go.

(9A. Family (Part 2))

(TEEN LENNA shows Young Alex the house.)

WHERE'S ALL YOUR STUFF?

IN THIS BAG. YOUNG ALEX

TEEN LENNA
THAT'S ALL YOU HAVE?

YOUNG ALEX
YUP.

TEEN LENNA
FOR REAL? WHAT A DRAG.
DON'T YOU HAVE TOYS, OR LIKE BOOKS, OR SOME GAMES?

YOUNG ALEX
NO, BUT I HAVE SOME COOL PICTURE FRAMES.

TEEN LENNA
Why do you have picture frames?

YOUNG ALEX
I collect them. I like to draw. Then I put the pictures in the frames.

TEEN LENNA
I like to build shit, stuff I mean.

YOUNG ALEX
I've heard the S word before.

TEEN LENNA
HOW MANY HOMES HAVE YOU HAD?

YOUNG ALEX
I GUESS THERE WERE FIVE

TEEN LENNA
Yikes.

YOUNG ALEX
IT WASN'T SO BAD

TEEN LENNA
DO YOU HAVE LIKE A MOM OR A DAD OR AN AUNT

YOUNG ALEX
WELL I DIDN'T COME OUT OF AN EGG OR A PLANT

Yeah, I have a mom. Doesn't everybody? She couldn't take care of me so I went in foster care. Do you have a Dad?

TEEN LENNA
He drank too much, then he died. Where's your Dad?

YOUNG ALEX
He took drugs and killed someone.

TEEN LENNA
Should I be scared of you?

YOUNG ALEX
Why? I didn't kill someone.

TEEN LENNA
Mom says we're going to be your forever family and that we'll always be brother and sister. Weird.

YOUNG ALEX
*EVERY HOUSE I GO TO THAT'S WHAT ALL THE PEOPLE SAY
ALEX YOU'RE A GREAT KID AND WE HOPE YOU'LL ALWAYS STAY
THEN ALL THESE STUPID THINGS KEEP HAPPENING THAT AREN'T RIGHT
THEN SUDDENLY I'M DRAGGED OUT IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT

SO I AM NOT YOUR BROTHER, AND THAT LADY'S NOT MY MOM
CAUSE EVERY TIME WHEN I MOVE IN THEN THERE'S ANOTHER BOMB
I DON'T EVEN KNOW YOU AND YOU SEEM LIKE KIND OF MEAN
I'VE LIVED IN TONS OF PLACES THERE'S SOME REAL BAD STUFF I'VE SEEN*

TEEN LENNA
Um... sorry. (beat) Okay, I won't call you my brother.

(9B. Family (Part 3))

We could pretend like, this is an Air B and B and you're renting... or something? Do you want to see the bird?

YOUNG ALEX
I don't care.

(HE reaches to touch Teen Lenna's vintage record player.)

TEEN LENNA

Don't touch that. Please.

YOUNG ALEX

Sorry.

(HE continues to fight back tears.)

TEEN LENNA

*AFTER YOU MEET CHIRPY, MAYBE WE COULD PLAY SOME GAMES
OR PAINT AND SKETCH AND YOU COULD SHOW ME ALL YOUR PICTURE
FRAMES
I'LL TAKE HIM FROM HIS CAGE NOW SO YOU TWO CAN FINALLY MEET
I THINK YOU'RE GONNA LIKE HIM, CHIRPY'S LOVING AND SO SWEET*

CHIRPY

I LOVE YOU

*(TEEN LENNA opens Chirpy's cage. CHIRPY flies to YOUNG
ALEX and flaps HIS wing in YOUNG ALEX'S face. YOUNG ALEX
pulls away and starts crying inconsolably as MAE runs
in. TEEN LENNA puts CHIRPY back in his cage.)*

MAE

Now, what did you do?

TEEN LENNA

I let Chirpy out to see Alex.

MAE

Lenna, what happened?

TEEN LENNA

*Chirpy flapped his wing in his face and he freaked out. I didn't
do anything.*

(TEEN LENNA angrily turns away.)

MAE

Alex, come here, sit down. Can I hug you?

YOUNG ALEX

No, sorry. I mean, it's not like you're my Mom or anything.

MAE

I'm sorry... I um... oh, and I'm sorry Chirpy scared you. He won't hurt you. I think he's just excited that you're here. We are too.

*WE'RE SO HAPPY THAT YOU'VE JOINED OUR FAMILY
WE WERE A TWO BUT NOW WE ARE A THREE*

CHIRPY

I LOVE YOU

TEEN LENNA

*(to TEEN ALEX)
SORRY IF SCARED YOU*

MAE

*WE HOPE THAT YOU'LL BE COMFORTABLE AND HAPPY IN OUR HOME
WE'RE SO GLAD THAT OUR FAMILY'S COMPLETE*

*(THE ENSEMBLE brings us back to **PRESENT DAY**; at Nu Brew. LENNA who has been watching the FLASHBACK, leaves. JORDAN enters the coffee shop.)*

JORDAN

Hey, Alex.

ALEX

Jordan, what's up? Your usual?

JORDAN

Thanks, do you have a minute to talk?

ALEX

Sure. Blue, you got that?

(back to JORDAN)

How's school?

JORDAN

I'll be in grad school for the rest of my life.

(JORDAN sees the painting.)

That's gorgeous, is it new?

ALEX

No, I just hung it up. As frustrating as my big sister is, if it wasn't for her, I probably wouldn't have kept painting. You okay?

JORDAN

I think about her all the time.

ALEX

I get it.

(BLUE gives Jordan the coffee.)

JORDAN

Apparently, we've manifested her.

ALEX

Huh?

JORDAN

She's here. Now. In Harte Park.

ALEX

For real?

JORDAN

Yeah.

ALEX

Did you see her?

JORDAN

Yup. Sitting on a swing, smoking a cigarette, babbling to herself. And she wasn't wearing a jacket.

ALEX

Did you talk to her?

JORDAN

No. I panicked and walked away. Guess I still have a lot of big unresolved feelings.

ALEX

Get in line. My mom thought she saw Lenna run out of our house this morning and the plant in Chirpy's heavy old cage was knocked over. But I didn't believe her.

JORDAN

Why?

ALEX

Because she hasn't lived at home for like eight years. And the other day my mother thought John F. Kennedy was in the kitchen making shortbread... or scones or something. Did she see you?

JORDAN

Yeah, but we didn't speak. When was the last time you saw her?

(10. Try (Part 1))

ALEX

She popped in three years ago for a day.

JORDAN

I remember that...

ALEX

We bought her a toothbrush and toothpaste, dragged her to an NA meeting, gave her dinner which she didn't eat, then she shot up in the bathroom and left.

GOD, WHAT A JOKE, SHE'S HERE AGAIN
NOT GONNA LOSE MY SHIT, I'LL BREATHE COUNT TO TEN
WHY IS SHE BACK? IT'S NO SURPRISE
IT DOESN'T MATTER, I DON'T HAVE TO ANALYZE

JORDAN

We don't know anything yet, Alex.

ALEX

HARD TO BELIEVE BY NOT HELPING SHE'LL HEAL
IF I LEAVE HER ALONE WILL IT FORCE HER TO DEAL?
HOW CAN I STAND HERE AND WATCH HER LIFE BURNING
IT SAYS THAT IN MY 12 AND 12 WHERE I'M LEARNING

THAT I CAN'T HELP HER TURN THE TIDE
COME HELL OR HIGH WATER
SHE'S THE ONE WHO MUST DECIDE

JORDAN

Yah, we can only hope.

ALEX

ONCE SHE SWALLOWS UP HER PRIDE
MAYBE THEN I'LL SUPPORT HER
BUT I CAN'T SAVE HER
NO, I CAN'T SAVE HER

NO MATTER HOW HARD I TRY

If this isn't sad enough, Jordan, Mae is sick too.

NOT MUCH IS LEFT OF THE MOM THAT I KNEW
 MY DEEPEST FEARS ARE ALL COMING TRUE
 ALWAYS CONFUSED HER MEMORIES GONE
 I'M TOO SCARED TO KNOW HOW LONG SHE CAN CARRY ON

JORDAN

I just saw Mae a few weeks ago, she seemed fine. Is it really that bad?

ALEX

It's getting bad, fast.

JORDAN

Dementia?

ALEX

Yeah.

I STILL REMEMBER THE DAY THAT SHE FOUND ME
 FINALLY SETTLED IN LET HER SURROUND ME
 NOW I HAVE TO WITNESS HER FADING EACH MINUTE
 I KNOW IT'S SOME BULLSHIT HOW ELSE CAN I SPIN IT?

MY FOREVER FAMILY LIVING ON IN A PAINTING
 GHOSTS OF WHAT WE USED TO BE
 ONCE MOM'S GONE I GUARANTEE
 I'LL BE THE ONE FACE REMAINING

CAUSE I CAN'T SAVE HER
 NO I CAN'T SAVE HER
 NO MATTER HOW HARD I TRY
 NO MATTER HOW HARD I TRY

JORDAN

I'm so sorry, can I help in any way?

ALEX

Nothing to do really... right now.

JORDAN

This may be weird timing, but I'm doing my thesis on how birds can heal people. Remember how attached Mae and Lenna were to Chirpy? Maybe I could...

ALEX

Oh hell no, I'm not letting a bird near her. I'm still traumatized.

(10A. With Birds)

JORDAN

Me too. Maybe that's why I'm drawn to birds. To heal.

ALEX

I can't even...

JORDAN

Wait. Please listen.

AS AN UNDERGRAD I MOONLIT
AT THE BIRD STORE DOWN THE STREET
THERE WERE BRIGHTLY COLORED PARROTS
BOTH INTELLIGENT AND SWEET

I WOULD TEACH THEM GAMES AND HOLD THEM
AND I KIND OF FELL IN LOVE
WITH EACH COCKATIEL AND CONURE
AND A GENTLE MOURNING DOVE

THEN ONE DAY AN OLDER WOMAN
CAME INSIDE THE STORE IN TEARS
SHE WAS SOBBING AND COULD BARELY BREATHE
AS SHE SPOKE OF LOSS AND FEARS

THEN A BIRD SAT ON HER SHOULDER
AND SHE LIT UP LIKE A LIGHT
IT WAS RIGHT THEN THAT I REALIZED
THAT BIRD GAVE HER BACK HER FIGHT

(CHIRPY dances behind Jordan like a memory.)

WITH BIRDS YOU FIND YOUR WAY
THEY WILL SING TO YOU ALL DAY
WHEN THE CLOUDS HAVE COME TO STAY
THEY'LL SIT ON YOUR HEAD AND PLAY

I CANNOT AT ALL IMAGINE
YOU GET OUT OF BED ONE DAY
AND YOU FIND THAT MAKING BREAKFAST
IS A SKILL THAT'S SLIPPED AWAY

AND THERE'S NO ONE LEFT TO HOLD YOU
 AND REMIND YOU WHO YOU ARE
 IT HAS GOT TO BE SO LONELY
 LOVE WAS CLOSE BUT NOW IT'S FAR

(10B. Try (Part 2))

ALEX

What if it triggers her?

JORDAN

What if it helps?

ALEX

Remember how fucked up we were when Chirpy died?

JORDAN

I just want to...

ALEX

I get it, thank you. But I can't.

JORDAN

Why are you giving up? It's not like she's dead and neither is Lenna.

ALEX

Giving up? I take care of her twenty-four hours a day. As far as dying goes, if Lenna's living in a park in thirty-two degree weather, not wearing a jacket, babbling to herself, she's probably using. If she's using, then she's dying... maybe slowly, but dying nonetheless.

SO WHY SHOULD I HOPE THAT SHE'LL GET IT TOGETHER
 WHEN SHE'D RATHER SHOOT UP IN THIS BITTER COLD WEATHER?

JORDAN

I'VE BEEN WHERE SHE IS, SHE JUST NEEDS A BIT LONGER

ALEX

DON'T BET ON MY SIS, CUZ THIS WINTER IS STRONGER

(simultaneously with JORDAN)

I CAN'T HELP HER TURN HER TIDE
 COME HELL OR HIGH WATER
 SHE'S THE ONE WHO MUST DECIDE
 ONCE SHE'S SWALLOWED UP HER PRIDE

MAYBE THEN I'LL SUPPORT HER

BUT I CAN'T SAVE HER
 YOU CAN'T SAVE HER
 WE CAN'T SAVE HER
 NO MATTER HOW HARD WE...

JORDAN

(simultaneously with ALEX)

HOW CAN YOU SIT OUT
 LIVING IN YOUR WORLD OF DOUBT
 PLEASE HANG ON IT'S NOT GOOD-BYE

I KNOW YOU FEEL YOU'RE ALL ALONE
 BUT YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO THIS ON YOUR OWN
 THAT DOESN'T MEAN WE CAN'T...

ALEX & JORDAN

TRY...

JORDAN

It was just an idea. I wanted to tell you about Lenna. And I'm so sorry about Mae.

ALEX

Thanks.

JORDAN

For the record... I'm also sorry for how we treated you. Me and your sister. If I can make it up to you in any way, just let me know, okay?

ALEX

It was a long time ago, Jordan, we're cool.

JORDAN

Thanks, Alex.

(JORDAN exits the shop. ALEX slowly heads back behind the counter, paces. He is plagued by indecision.)

ALEX

Fuck!

(HE grabs his bag and coat and heads out of the shop.)